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UNITED NATIONS NEW AGENDA FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF AFRICA IN THE 1990S

QUESTION OF PALESTINE

ELIMINATION OF APARTHEID AND ESTABLISHMENT OF A UNITED, DEMOCRATIC AND NON-RACIAL SOUTH AFRICA

LAUNCHING OF GLOBAL NEGOTIATIONS ON INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION FOR DEVELOPMENT

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HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT

Letter dated 6 October 1993 from the Permanent Representative of Colombia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith the Declaration adopted on 5 October 1993 at the seventeenth annual meeting of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Group of 77, held at United Nations Headquarters in New York.

On behalf of the Group of 77, I should highly appreciate it if you would arrange for the Declaration of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Group of 77 to be circulated as an official document of the General Assembly under agenda items 24, 35, 38, 50, 56, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 99 and 104.

(Signed) Luis Fernando JARAMILLO
Ambassador and Permanent Representative of
Colombia to the United Nations
Chairman of the Group of 77
New York

ANNEX

Declaration of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Group of 77 adopted at the seventeenth annual meeting held in New York on 5 October 1993

1. The seventeenth annual meeting of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Group of 77 was held in New York on 5 October 1993.

2. The Ministers welcomed the admission to membership of the United Nations of Andorra, Czech Republic, Eritrea, Monaco, Slovak Republic and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. The admission of these new members strengthens the ideal of universality of the United Nations.

3. The Ministers also welcomed the admission of the Federated States of Micronesia as full member of the Group of 77.

I. DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION

4. The Ministers expressed deep concern over the continued uncertain prospects of global economic recovery and its grave consequences for the developing countries. The Ministers underlined that the continued existence of unfavourable external conditions, such as slow economic growth and inconsistent macroeconomic policies pursued by developed countries, not only created obstacles to the economic and social development of developing countries but also threatened their economic, political and social stability.

5. The Ministers regretted that developed countries still lacked the political will to achieve effective and equitable solutions to the world economic stagnation. They also regretted the tendency on the part of a group of developed countries to take decisions of global concern outside the multilateral framework of the United Nations system that affect the world economy without giving full consideration to the interests of developing countries.

6. The Ministers called for the full and effective participation of the developing countries in the process of decision-making and in the resolution of world economic problems through strengthening multilateralism founded on a systemic coordination of policies on a global basis aimed at promoting equitable growth in the world economy. They emphasized that the increasing internationalization of the world economy required an equitable and effective mechanism of multilateral macroeconomic policy coordination which should allow for greater participation of developing countries and take into account their needs and concerns.

7. The Ministers reaffirmed the need for a constructive dialogue between the North and the South as an instrument for the promotion of the economic growth and development of developing countries. They stressed that such a dialogue should be conducted based on the economic imperative of mutuality of interests and benefits, genuine interdependence and equitable sharing of responsibilities. To this end, close collaboration and coordination

between the Group of 77 and the Non-Aligned Movement is essential in order to ensure complementarity of efforts.

8. The Ministers emphasized the need for a full and timely implementation of the Declaration on International Economic Co-operation, in particular the Revitalization of Economic Growth and Development of the Developing Countries through national policies and enhanced international co-operation aimed at the reactivation of economic growth and development of developing countries. They also reaffirmed the importance and continued validity of the International Development Strategy for the Fourth Development Decade, the Cartagena Commitment of UNCTAD VIII, the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s, the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the 1990s and the outcome of the UNCED process, as well as the Declaration on the World Conference on Human Rights held in Vienna on 14-25 June 1993 which, inter alia, endorsed the right to development.

9. The Ministers reiterated their concern that the increasing needs of Central and Eastern Europe for external resources are affecting the availability of resources to the developing countries. They regretted that despite the assurances given by developed countries and the multilateral financial institutions that the assistance to be given to the Central and Eastern European countries would not be at the expense of developing countries, the resources have decreased. The Ministers stressed that those needs should be met from additional resources and not at the expense of resources earmarked for the developing countries.

10. The Ministers expressed concern at the continued actions aimed at introducing new conditionalities in redefining the basis of international economic cooperation. The Ministers were of the view that each country has to define for itself its national goals, objectives and priorities in its development process. They stressed that the role of international community is to support and supplement the national efforts of developing countries.

AGENDA FOR DEVELOPMENT

11. The Ministers expressed their concern that the United Nations has not been attaching the priority it should to development issues. They stressed the critical need for an integrated approach to development. In this context, they underscored the importance of the initiative of an agenda for development, as a means for giving renewed momentum to a dialogue on the development issues under the premise that favourable economic and social conditions can contribute to strengthen peace and stability, and that the United Nations should promote the impetus towards the solution of global problems in an integrated manner.

12. To this end, they reaffirmed their commitment to strengthen the role of the United Nations system in the promotion of economic and social development, and invited all parties to initiate a constructive dialogue on development issues at the present session of the General

Assembly, in response to the Secretary-General's invitation for a lively and fruitful discussion of his preliminary report on Agenda for Development.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

13. The Ministers stressed the critical need for an equitable, secure, non-discriminatory and predictable international trading system which should enhance trade and development possibilities of developing countries and facilitate an increased share of these countries in international trade. To this end, they urged developed countries to implement international trade liberalization measures as a necessary step towards the establishment of a just and equitable multilateral trading system. The Ministers stressed that the trade policy reforms being undertaken by developing countries would be frustrated unless the developed countries took positive structural adjustment measures providing larger export possibilities to developing countries.

14. The Ministers also reiterated the need for a prompt, successful and balanced outcome of the Uruguay Round. The result of these negotiations should promote the development aspirations of developing countries. In particular, the negotiations must ensure the substantial enhancement of market access for developing country exports and the immediate halting and rolling back of protectionism that distorts world trade in textiles and agriculture. They also stressed that any agreement on intellectual property rights should fully reflect the levels of development of developing countries and their development aspirations.

15. The Ministers deplored the intensification of protectionist measures outside of and inconsistent with the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT). They also noted with concern the increasing use by developed countries of "anti-dumping" measures and countervailing duty action against developing countries, the use of export subsidies, the persistence of high tariff and non-tariff measures affecting developing country exports. They called for strict adherence to the accepted rules, norms and principles of the multilateral trading system.

16. The Ministers called on the developed countries to urgently implement the commitments undertaken at the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development at its eighth session, which were of particular relevance to the development and trade needs of the developing countries. The Ministers stressed that the firm determination of the developing countries to pursue the dialogue contributed substantially to the results of UNCTAD VIII. They reiterated the hope that this constructive result can contribute, if matched with the necessary political will of the developed countries, to the advancement of multilateral co-operation towards the promotion of growth and development.

17. The Ministers noted with concern the continued deterioration of the terms of trade of commodity exporting countries as a result of low prices of commodities and protectionism. To this end, the Ministers recalled the decision by UNCTAD VIII to launch a process of

consultations on the possibility of convening an international conference on commodities and underlined the urgency of such a conference. The Ministers also called upon the international community to support the efforts of developing countries to diversify their commodities sectors.

18. The Ministers paid particular attention to the intensification and geographical concentration of economic integration processes, especially since the end of the 1980s. They noted that UNCTAD VIII had identified the evolution and consequences of the emerging enlarged economic spaces and regional integration processes as one of the priorities within the area of global interdependence. They stressed the need to ensure that the integration arrangements, particularly those which have a major impact on global trade, impart dynamism to world trade, enhance trade and development possibilities of developing countries and strengthen the international trading system in conformity with the GATT.

19. The Ministers affirmed the need to improve the Generalized System of Preferences and called upon preference-giving countries to ensure the continuity and broadening of their Generalized System of Preferences schemes and to avoid the introduction into the system of discriminatory measures.

20. The Ministers called upon the international community for the immediate elimination of the use of coercive economic measures against developing countries which have not been authorized by the relevant organs of the United Nations or are inconsistent with the principles contained in the United Nations Charter as a means of forcibly imposing the will of one state on another.

EXTERNAL DEBT OF DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

21. The Ministers expressed deep concern that the development efforts of developing countries, in particular the provision for essential social and economic services, including housing, education and health, are severely hampered by the imperative need to set aside a substantial portion of national budgets for the servicing of external debt.

22. The Ministers underscored that the debt burden had an adverse impact on the economies of the developing countries. This situation was further exacerbated by the negative effect of the structural adjustment process, flow of financial resources from developing to developed countries, unpredictability of the international financial system, decline in official development assistance, deteriorating terms of trade of developing countries and sharp falls in commodities prices as well as escalating protectionism in the developed countries. The Ministers, therefore, stressed that the reduction in the stock and service of debt should be a central element in addressing the debt problem of developing countries.

23. The Ministers emphasized that the problem of the external debt of developing countries should not be viewed only in its narrow technical aspects but also in its serious political and social dimensions, aggravated by the drastic impact of the imbalances in the international monetary, financial and trading system, thus requiring political treatment involving debtor countries and creditor countries, as well as international institutions that have a shared responsibility in the solution of the debt problem of developing countries. The Ministers therefore urged those countries and institutions to find an effective, comprehensive, equitable, development-oriented and durable solution to the debt problem of developing countries with a view to substantially reducing the debt and debt services of developing countries. This approach should also cover all types of debt and debtor developing countries. Special consideration should be given to low- and middle-income countries which, despite an adverse financial situation, continue to meet their debt obligations in a timely fashion.

24. In this context, the Ministers also emphasized that a solution of the debt problem must include strengthening and liberalization of the international trading system as the most important source of real growth and development and, therefore, of the necessary resources for debtor countries to face their financial obligations. They also stressed the continued consideration and wider application of innovative measures, such as debt-for-equity swaps, debt swaps for the protection of nature and debt-for-development swaps as contributions towards addressing the external debt problem of developing countries.

MONETARY AND FINANCIAL SYSTEM

25. The Ministers reiterated that the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank should be purely economic, neutral and non-conditional institutions and should review their policies and practices so they actively contribute to a new financial and monetary system, more equitable and supportive of development efforts of developing countries. They expressed their serious concern over the lack of progress in efforts to effect meaningful reform and to restructure the international monetary and financial system, in order to democratize the decision-making process in the multilateral financial institutions so that the interests and needs of developing countries would be adequately represented.

26. The Ministers emphasized the importance of closer and continued coordination between the Group of 77 and the Group of 24 within the framework of the multilateral financial institutions in order to promote the interests of the developing countries in multilateral negotiations.

DEVELOPMENT FINANCE

27. The Ministers expressed their concern over the diminishing levels of development finance to developing countries further aggravated by the outflow of resources resulting from

debt services and sustained deterioration in the terms of trade. Such resources are essential to meet the investment and capital requirements of developing countries to address the development needs of their populations. In this context, the Ministers reiterated the importance of convening an international conference on the financing of development.

28. The Ministers reaffirmed the urgent need for concerted action for a substantial increase in the flows of financial resources for development on an assured, continuous and predictable basis consistent with the growing requirements of the developing countries. They deplored the fact that the minimum ODA target of 0.7% of GNP and the minimum ODA targets for the Least Developed Countries remained largely unfulfilled. The Ministers also called for a substantial increase in the financial resources of the multilateral institutions, together with a review of their lending policies in order to promote additional lending and growth.

29. The Ministers recalled that the provision of additional concessional resources to low-income countries is a matter of particular importance. They underlined the need for increasing in real terms the resources available under the tenth replenishment of IDA, taking into account the growing needs of low-income countries for concessional finance. Similarly, additional financial flows under the Structural Adjustment Facility (SAF) and the Enhanced Structural Adjustment Facility (ESAF) should provide medium-term concessional flows to low-income countries.

FOREIGN DIRECT INVESTMENT

30. The Ministers underscored the importance of foreign direct investment as a mechanism for economic growth and development in developing countries. In this context, they recognized that many developing countries are undergoing extensive economic reforms to establish a positive investment climate. They stressed that as part of their efforts to increase the flow of resources to developing countries, industrialized countries should provide greater incentives for foreign investment in developing countries.

ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

31. The Ministers welcomed the outcome of the first substantive session of the Commission on Sustainable Development, which would help enhance international cooperation towards the implementation of Agenda 21 and monitor financial and technology flows to developing countries, in order to ensure that the follow-up of the Rio Conference will meet the hopes and aspirations of all countries. In this respect, the Ministers stressed the importance of ensuring that the means of implementation of the Rio decisions are fully honoured and met.

32. In this connection, they also welcomed the establishment of the inter-sessional open-ended ad-hoc working groups on financial resources and transfer of technology, comprised of experts nominated by governments and which, in full respect of the procedures and mandate of the Commission on Sustainable Development, will contribute to the full implementation of Agenda 21.

33. They reaffirmed that sustainable development is of paramount concern to developing countries, and therefore asserted that Agenda 21 and the Rio Declaration demonstrated a global commitment to assist the developing countries in both accelerating development and in improving their environment.

34. With respect to the work of the Commission on Sustainable Development, the Ministers reaffirmed that the multi-year thematic programme of work should be strictly adhered to, so that the Commission may consider, within an agreed chronological framework, all its cross-sectoral and sectoral issues with a view to the overall review of the implementation of Agenda 21 to be undertaken in 1997.

35. The Ministers emphasized that the readiness of developing countries for environmental protection can only be implemented effectively with simultaneous efforts to solve the problems of world poverty, debt, international equality and by a reactivation of the development process of developing countries through the removal of the external constraints to such reactivation and by creating a supportive external economic environment. The concept of sustainable development must necessarily include the meeting of basic needs of peoples of developing countries and maintaining adequate levels of growth for the quality of life in a healthy, safe and clean environment.

36. They stressed that insufficient financing is the key obstacle to the promotion of greater effectiveness of developing countries' efforts in the protection of the environment. The Ministers re-emphasized the importance of international co-operation to provide the developing countries with new and additional financial resources without imposing any forms of conditionalities. In this regard, they reiterated the need for political will on the part of developed countries for the effective implementation of their commitments embodied in Agenda 21 in the area of financial resources.

37. The Ministers stressed that the development and transfer of environmentally sound technologies are essential components of a successful strategy for sustainable development. Therefore, it is important to emphasize that effective modalities be agreed upon for the creation, development, favorable access to and transfer of environmentally sound technologies to developing countries on favourable terms, including concessional and preferential terms. This agreement should include the establishment in developing countries of international, regional and subregional environmental technology centres, and the dissemination of information on existing environmentally sound technologies.

38. The Ministers endorsed fully the positions adopted by the Group of 77 and China during the Special Participants' Meeting of the Global Environmental Facility held in Washington, D.C. in September 1993, particularly on the issue relating to the functions of the Participants' Assembly, Decision-making, the Role of the Trustee, the Chairmanship of the Management Board, the functional independence of the Secretariat, and the procedures for legal adoption of the text to be agreed upon in Cartagena, Colombia, in December 1993.

39. The Ministers called for a cautious approach to the proposal for "carbon-dioxide taxes" which could produce various constraints to the development of developing countries.

40. The Ministers also welcomed the establishment of the Intergovernmental Negotiation Committee to elaborate an International Convention to combat desertification in those countries experiencing drought and/or desertification, in particular in Africa. They called upon the developed countries as well as the relevant international organizations to pay due regard to the elaboration of this Convention, which should contain appropriate commitments. They stressed the importance of the elaboration and adoption of such an international convention before June 1994.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

41. The Ministers noted the paramount importance of science and technology for development in the developing countries. They expressed their concern over the marginal opportunity available to the developing countries to participate in the current scientific and technological revolution. They asserted that development is a fundamental right of humanity and can only be achieved through the elimination of all obstacles and limitations that will prevent the developing countries from having access to the latest scientific and technological knowledge. They noted in particular that the obstruction of the transfer of technology in pursuit of political goals constituted a serious impediment to their enjoyment of this right, thus endangering the development of the developing countries.

42. They expressed their full support to the activities of the United Nations on science and technology and stressed that any administrative rearrangement in the Organization should enhance its capacity to fulfil its programmes in this matter. The Ministers were also of the view that the United Nations has a crucial role to foster international co-operation multilaterally for the effective and efficient transfer of new technologies to developing countries. They stressed that the development and enhancement of endogenous capacities of developing countries in the fields of science and technology are vital for the economic growth and development of those countries. In this regard, UNCTAD has played a major role in identifying major issues arising from the transfer of technology to developing countries and the obstacles thereto.

43. The Ministers also considered the need to establish cooperative linkages that would facilitate the exchange of information and experiences among developing countries in the field

of technology, including biotechnology. In this regard, the Ministers welcomed the concrete initiative taken by African countries for the establishment of an African Agency for Biotechnology in Algiers and emphasised the importance of such an initiative and urged the U.N. system, developed countries and developing countries to provide support to this Agency.

44. The Ministers urged the continuing implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action on Science and Technology for Development and called on all countries, especially developed ones, as well as the international development institutions, to consider seriously the reinvigoration of the United Nations Financing System for Science and Technology for Development as envisaged in the Vienna Programme of Action. The Commission on Science and Technology for Development is to play a key role in providing, inter alia, a global framework for the assessment of scientific and technological progress and its impact on developing countries.

INDUSTRIALIZATION

45. The Ministers stressed the need to sustain the industrialization of developing countries in view of the critical role it plays in accelerating economic and social development. They took note of the impact of structural reforms on the industrial sector and the uneven growth and development of global industrial production leading to the de-industrialization of many developing countries. They highlighted the importance of finding innovative measures for revitalizing the industrial sector considering the current state of the international economy.

46. Cognizant of the important role played by the industrial sector in the overall economic development of developing countries, the Ministers saw the need to strengthen UNIDO's co-ordinating role within the United Nations system with respect to industrial development in order that it can better serve the needs of developing countries in their pursuit of industrial development. They called on relevant international organizations to co-operate closely with UNIDO on matters involving industrial development, considering the cross-sectoral nature of industrialization.

47. The Ministers took note with appreciation of the current efforts made by UNIDO to reorient its priorities and reform its structure in order to contribute more efficiently to equitable and sustainable development in general and to better satisfy the industrialization demands of the developing countries in particular. They urged both developed and developing countries to extend their full support to UNIDO in its revitalization efforts.

48. The Ministers emphasized Economic Cooperation among Developing Countries (ECDC) as a critical element in the industrialization process of developing countries, particularly in areas such as the promotion of small-and medium-scale industries, industrial technology and information and industrial human resources development. They urged the donor countries and UNIDO as executing agency to augment their resources allocated to ECDC activities in the field of industrialization.

POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT

49. The Ministers reaffirmed that the question of population cannot be considered in isolation and should be closely integrated to development. In this regard, there is a need for all countries to strengthen the level of awareness of its people on population issues. The international community should support the national policies and programmes of all countries, especially developing countries, taking into account the sovereign right of all countries to formulate, adopt and implement their population policies, mindful of their social, economic and political conditions. Such population programmes should aim at improvements in the quality of human resources and expansion of job opportunities. In this regard, the Ministers underlined the importance of the International Conference on Population and Development on 5 to 13 September 1994 in Cairo, as a means to achieve concrete improvements in international cooperation in this field, and to formulate a programme of action containing a set of recommendations on population and development for the next decade and beyond. The Ministers welcomed the spirit and efforts aimed at the successful outcome of the Cairo Conference and its preparatory process and they called further upon all States to actively participate and constructively contribute to the process.

HUMAN SETTLEMENTS

50. The Ministers reaffirmed their full support to the objectives of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) in 1996 as a way to take appropriate action at national and international level aimed at alleviating the conditions of the poor and disadvantaged. They also stressed the importance of the Global Strategy for Shelter to the Year 2000.

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

51. The Ministers reiterated their full commitment to the World Summit on Social Development, which will take place in Copenhagen in 1995. They reaffirmed that their countries will participate in the preparatory process at the highest possible level, and hoped that the outcome of the Summit will bring effective and real solutions to eliminate poverty and unemployment, and to strengthen social cohesion. In the present conditions it is difficult to establish a unique, universal and uniform strategy for social development, so it is essential to take into account cultural and socio-economic aspects, as well as the inside dynamic of each society. In this regard, the Ministers reaffirmed the necessity to have regional meetings as part of the preparatory process for the World Summit

52. The Ministers considered that the World Summit for Social Development is an important opportunity to build upon the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development by consolidating and strengthening the linkage between

poverty, environment, and development and enhancing the promotion of a real and substantive international cooperation strategy.

EDUCATION

53. The Ministers reaffirmed that eradication of illiteracy and providing education for all should remain a top priority goal. They stressed that a high priority should be given to the education of girls and women particularly in the rural areas. The Ministers noted with appreciation the efforts undertaken under the leadership of UNESCO, which have contributed to the reduction in world wide illiteracy rates in real terms.

54. Noting the results of the system-wide efforts undertaken to follow-up the recommendations of UNCED and particularly Agenda 21, the Ministers reaffirmed the key-role of education and training in addressing environmental problems and in moving towards sustainable development. In this context, they noted the contribution that UNESCO has made to the creation of awareness as well as endogenous capacities in developing countries, particularly through its activities in environmental education and information.

55. The Ministers reaffirmed that in today's increasingly interdependent world, world-wide sharing of knowledge and information is vital for finding solutions to development problems and for advancing towards the common welfare of mankind. In this context, they welcomed the initiative taken by UNESCO to help to tap the wealth of information available, to refine it through research and to share new found solutions with others through exchange networks, university training arrangements (UNITWIN) and UNESCO chairs programme, in its fields of competence.

56. The Ministers reaffirmed that development of human resources is crucial for achieving economic and social development goals. They urged that education and training which play a key role in human resources development should be designed to empower individuals with creative abilities, skills and self-reliance so that they participate actively and productively in the development process.

UN OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES FOR DEVELOPMENT

57. The Ministers reiterated the importance of the operational activities for development of the United Nations system and emphasized neutrality, non-conditionality and the purely economic role of all operational organs and the need to attach priority to that area in the plans and programmes of the United Nations. They noted with concern the declining resources available for operational activities, resulting in the disruption of the development activities supported by the organizations of the United Nations system in developing countries. That adverse situation, coming simultaneously with the reduction of official development assistance seriously impairs the development efforts of developing countries.

The Ministers therefore called for substantial and real increase in the flow of resources for operational activities for development on a continuous, predictable and assured basis. The Ministers reaffirmed the principles of universality, multilateralism, neutrality, non-conditionality and flexibility in meeting the technical cooperation requirements of developing countries. They reaffirmed the need for the full implementation of relevant resolutions of the General Assembly in this field.

58. The Ministers firmly opposed the extension of the functions of the United Nations Resident Coordinators to the political sphere. In this regard, they expressed concern over proposals aimed at distorting the legitimate nature of the U.N. field offices which deal with U.N. operational activities for development, whose mandates are clearly outlined in relevant General Assembly resolutions.

CRITICAL ECONOMIC SITUATION IN AFRICA

59. The Ministers reiterated their profound concern at the persistent critical economic situation in Africa. They were convinced that, if not reversed, current trends could considerably worsen the situation, thus endangering the economic and social conditions of African countries and hampering the prospects for their rehabilitation and development. They expressed their solidarity with the African countries and urged the international community, particularly the developed countries, to adopt and implement concrete and effective measures to support the efforts of the African countries in the process of economic reforms and development.

60. They noted with deep concern the critical conditions in the external debt of African countries and the heavy and unbearable burden of debt-servicing that had led to the paradoxical situation where African countries found themselves net exporters of capital to the developed countries and international financial institutions. Furthermore, the Ministers noted that the deteriorating prices for primary commodities, insufficient foreign investment and declining flows of official development assistance to the region has adversely affected the ability of African countries to meet their development objectives as well as their other financial obligations.

61. The Ministers reiterated their full support to the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s which was adopted by the forty-sixth session of the U.N. General Assembly, renewing the commitment of the international community to achieve self-sustaining socio-economic growth and development in Africa. The Ministers called upon the international community and especially the developed countries, the United Nations and the multilateral finance and development institutions, to support the New Agenda and to take appropriate measures to implement the commitments undertaken in it, including financial contributions for the establishment of the Diversification Fund for African Commodities.

LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES

62. The Ministers expressed deep concern at the continued deterioration of the economic, social and ecological situation of the Least Developed Countries and urged all countries and multilateral institutions to take urgent and appropriate measures to reverse the trend. In this context, they called upon the International Community to take necessary steps in order to fully implement the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the 1990s. They underlined the imperative need for providing those countries with necessary support, including adequate official development assistance, in order to revitalize their development process. They called for total cancellation of all bilateral official debt as well as urgent and effective measures for substantial reduction of LDCs debt stock and debt service burden owed to multilateral financial institutions and commercial creditors. They also called for improved market access for the products from the LDCs. They recommended that for effective follow-up, monitoring and implementation of the Programme of Action adequate resources should be made available to the concerned agencies of the United Nations system.

LAND-LOCKED AND TRANSIT DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

63. The Ministers noted with great concern the deterioration in the economic, social and financial position of the land-locked and transit developing countries, and recommended that the concrete measures contained in the relevant resolutions adopted by the United Nations system should be strictly adhered to, with a view to overcoming the difficult problems and structural constraints that hamper the development efforts of those countries. They called upon the donor community, the multilateral and development financial institutions to provide additional and adequate technical and financial resources for capital input and infrastructural development and other measures required to alleviate their specific transit transport, management and communications problems in accordance with the relevant United Nations resolutions.

SMALL ISLAND DEVELOPING STATES (SIDS)

64. The Ministers stressed the importance of the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, to be held in Barbados from 25 April to 6 May 1994, as a further step in the implementation of the commitments of Agenda 21 made at the June 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro. They noted that the specific problems of Small Island Developing States, including adaptation to the adverse effects of climate change, growing incidence of natural and other man-made disasters and vulnerability to external economic shocks, served to heighten their susceptibility to the hostile economic environment. In this regard, the Ministers called upon the international community, in particular the donor countries and the United Nations system, to provide the necessary financial and technical resources to support the implementation of a SIDS-specific "programme of action" aimed at addressing the specific vulnerabilities, constraints and obstacles to the sustainable

development of these economically and ecologically fragile and vulnerable States. To ensure the success of the Global Conference, the Ministers strongly recommended that a resumed preparatory session of the Preparatory Committee for the Global Conference for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States be held prior to April 1994 to reach agreement on the "programme of action".

II RESTRUCTURING OF THE UNITED NATIONS

65. The Ministers reiterated the importance of the United Nations as the central forum for dialogue and negotiations on issues relating to international co-operation for development and called upon all States to respect the democratic principles as embodied in the Charter of the United Nations. They also called for a stronger United Nations system to handle the complex and interrelated problems facing the world economy, in due coordination with the multilateral financial institutions. They expressed deep concern at the financial crisis of the United Nations, which has placed in jeopardy the ability of the Organization to carry out its mandated programmes and which undermines the very essence of multilateralism.

66. The Ministers reaffirmed that the General Assembly resolution 45/264 provided the guiding principles and guidelines for the restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations system in the economic, social and related fields. This effort should also take into account the thrust and principles contained in S-18/3 adopted at the Eighteenth Special Session of the General Assembly, resolutions 45/199 and 46/235 and other relevant resolutions. Within this framework, the Ministers took note of the ongoing negotiations and reaffirmed their commitment to achieving a consensus agreement on further measures for reform, aiming at improving the division of labour between the General Assembly, ECOSOC and the governing bodies of the United Nations development programmes and funds, and ensure the financing of the operational activities of the United Nations system on a continuous, predictable and assured basis, to enhance the effectiveness of the work of these organs.

REFORM OF THE U.N. SECRETARIAT

67. The Ministers noted that the resolution 47/212B of the General Assembly established important guidelines that the Secretary-General should take into account in the implementation of the reform of the Secretariat of the United Nations. The Ministers expressed special interest in the follow-up of the guidelines aimed at strengthening the capacity of the Secretariat to support the U.N. activities in the economic and social fields. Among them, utmost importance was attached to the areas of science and technology, transnational corporations and technical cooperation. The Ministers agreed to follow with interest the future evaluation of the real impact of the reform in these specific areas.

III SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION

68. The Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to Economic Cooperation among Developing Countries (ECDC) and reiterated their conviction that it constitutes an integral and essential part of the efforts of the developing countries to promote economic growth, technological capacities and accelerated development. They also reiterated their conviction that South-South cooperation not only is a means of taking advantage of existing and potential complementarities in the economies of developing countries, but can also contribute to restructuring international economic relations and to strengthening the world economy. The Ministers furthermore noted with satisfaction that in the past few years there has been a robust resurgence of interest, willingness and determination among developing countries in South-South cooperation. The new expectations, in turn, have sparked a strong movement to introduce into the South-South cooperation process fresh and novel approaches and modalities in keeping with changing global circumstances so that South-South cooperation could be rendered more dynamic and realistic. They also reiterated their conviction that as a mean of enhancing their negotiating power vis-à-vis the developed countries, South-South Cooperation was essential to reduce the vulnerability of the developing countries to the effects of adverse international economic environment.

69. The Ministers appealed to the members to contribute generously to the "ECDC Account" in order to facilitate the implementation of the Caracas Programme of Action. For those that have not contributed an special appeal is made to do so and to those who have already contributed an appeal is made to increase their contributions. They also emphasized the need for strengthening the Office of the Chairman of the Group of 77 and the importance of the work of the Core of Assistants. They invited the Chairman of the Group of 77 to take all necessary measures to that purpose.

70. The Ministers stressed the importance of continued support, particularly through technical assistance and financing by the United Nations system, to Economic Cooperation among Developing Countries. They reiterated that ECDC was a matter of recognized importance in relevant United Nations resolutions and stressed the importance of the role of organizations and bodies of the United Nations system in the promotion of economic and technical co-operation among developing countries.

71. The Ministers endorsed the outcome of the Eighth Meeting of the Intergovernmental Follow-up and Coordination Committee for Economic Cooperation among Developing Countries, held at Panama City from 30 August to 3 September 1993, and endorsed its recommendations. The Ministers agreed that the Panama meeting had achieved its objectives aimed at the reactivation of the Caracas Programme of Action on Economic Cooperation among Developing Countries and stressed the importance of carrying out the recommendations made by the Committee. They expressed their thanks to the Government of Panama for hosting the IFCC-VIII.

72. The Ministers emphasized the importance of holding sectoral follow-up meetings as envisaged in IFCC-VIII recommendations. They called on Member States to come forward to offer venues to these meetings as well as other meetings that might arise from IFCC-VIII and provide their full support for the implementation of the recommendations of these meetings. The Ministers further endorsed the decision by IFCC-VIII to establish an intersessional mechanism in the years when IFCC is not in session and urged Member States to participate at these meetings. They invited the Chairman of the Group of 77 to take all necessary measures to that purpose.

73. The Ministers stressed the need for integrating economic co-operation among developing countries in national policy-making and stressed the role of national focal points as pivotal mechanisms of the Caracas Programme of Action.

IV PALESTINE

74. The Ministers considered the recent development concerning the question of Palestine and took note of the momentous event of 13 September 1993. They regarded the signing of the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements between the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Government of Israel as an important first step. In this regard, they reaffirmed that this important step should lead to the achievement of a just, lasting and comprehensive peace in the Middle East based on Security Council Resolutions 242, 338 , 425 and on the formula of "Land for Peace".

75. The Ministers reaffirmed their support of the Palestinian people as they strive to attain their inalienable rights, including the right to establish an independent State on the Palestinian occupied territory, including Arab Jerusalem. They also reaffirmed the permanent responsibility of the United Nations towards the Question of Palestine. The Ministers called upon the international community, especially the developed countries, the U.N. and multilateral finance and development institutions, to fully support the implementation of the agreement in all possible ways. In this regard, they welcomed the recent initial commitments made.

V. SOUTH AFRICA

76. The Ministers took note of the recent developments that have taken place in South Africa, including the positive measures taken within the multi-party negotiating forum, particularly the establishment of 27 April 1994 as the date for South Africa's first democratic and non-racial elections and the endorsement of the reintegration of Walvis Bay and the off-shore islands into Namibia. They also expressed the hope that the Transitional Executive Council will become functional as soon as possible so as to further facilitate the resolution of the outstanding transitional and constitutional issues. However, the Ministers expressed deep concern about the escalation of political violence in South Africa. They were of the view that

it was the primary responsibility of all governments to maintain security for all their citizens and therefore called upon the South African authorities to ensure conditions of peace, stability and personal security. They also urged the other various parties concerned to do their utmost to bring the ongoing violence to an end. In response to the appeal made by the broad spectrum of the people of South Africa on lifting of all economic sanctions, the Ministers, recognized this reality, and, in consonance with this wish, called upon the international community at large and the United Nations in particular to respond positively to this appeal and to lift all sanctions, with the exception of those relating to the arms embargo and nuclear matters. The Ministers called upon the international community to continue to provide financial and other assistance to those countries in Southern Africa which continue to suffer from the adverse effects of past acts of aggression and destabilization in the region.

VI NAM AND G-77

77. The Ministers welcomed the results of the Meeting of the Standing Ministerial Committee for Economic Cooperation of the Movement of the Non-Aligned Countries held in Bali, Indonesia, from 10 to 13 May 1993.

78. The Ministers endorsed with satisfaction the support given to the implementation of the Caracas Programme of Action on ECDC by the Standing Ministerial Committee for Economic Cooperation of the Non-Aligned Movement. The Ministers also endorsed the recommendations concerning the harmonization of the implementation of the Caracas Programme of Action on Economic Cooperation among Developing Countries and the Action Programme for Economic Cooperation of the Non-Aligned Countries, as contained in the final report of the IFCC-VIII.

79. The Ministers considered that there is an increasing need to further strengthen coordination and cohesiveness between the Group of 77 and the Non-Aligned Movement for the purpose of deliberating various international issues, in particular within the United Nations system, and in order to ensure complementarity of efforts. In this context, they firmly believed that the Joint Coordinating Committee (JCC) between the Group of 77 and the Non-Aligned Movement could best accommodate these functions. They directed the Chairman of the Group of 77 to continue his consultations with the Chairman of the Coordinating Bureau of the Non-Aligned Movement as well as with Member States of the Group in order to operationalize the Committee during 1994. They mandated the Chairman of the Group of 77 to take all necessary steps for that purpose, including those agreed upon by the IFCC-VIII.

80. The Ministers were of the view that in the context of harmonization of efforts between the programmes of NAM and the Group of 77 there was a need to strengthen co-operation among developing countries in sectoral areas related to development.

VII HUMANITARIAN ISSUES

81. The Ministers underscored that the implementation of decisions by the United Nations should, as far as possible, seek to minimize the negative impact on the innocent civilian population of affected countries, as well as the adverse economic impacts on third countries.

VIII XXX ANNIVERSARY OF THE GROUP OF 77

82. The Ministers were convinced that the XXX anniversary of the creation of the Group of 77 on 15 June 1994 constitutes an opportunity to reaffirm the resolve of the Group to implement its goals and objectives in the light of the new challenges facing developing countries. The Ministers invited the Chairman of the Group of 77 to conduct appropriate consultations with a view to deciding how this important event should be commemorated on 15 June 1994, including the possibility of convening a special meeting of the Group of 77 at an appropriate level.

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